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Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

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Continental News

SADC to Send Troops to DRC to Help Quell Disturbances in East

GA B O R O N E , BOTSWANA — The Southern African Development Community (SADC) plans to send troops to

security situation in eastern DRC is cause for concern.

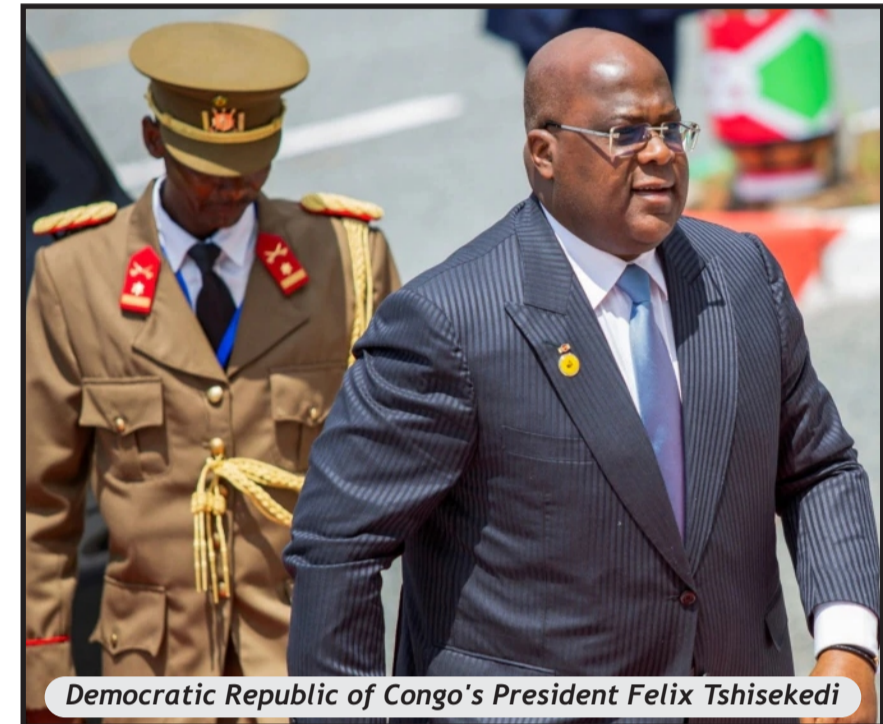
"The summit reiterated SADC's solidarity to assist the government and people of the Republic of Congo in its efforts to

within the framework of the SADC Standby Force as a regional response in support of the DRC to restore peace and security in Eastern DRC. Summit approved a SADC Common Position to have a more coordinated approach, given the multiple deployments under multilateral and bilateral arrangements in the eastern DRC, and urged the Government of the DRC to put in place the necessary conditions and measures for effective coordination amongst sub-regional forces and bilateral partners operating in the DRC," said Magosi.

South Africa, an SADC member, already has 1,184 soldiers deployed in the DRC under the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the DRC, known as MONUSCO.

Security expert Willem Els at the Pretoria-based Institute of Security Studies said there is a need for clarity on the deployment of the SADC force.

"They want to send troops but they did not give any details. We do not know if they are going to complement the troops that are currently deployed in the DRC under MONUSCO or whether they will be separate," said Els. "We know that Kenya as well as Uganda have already deployed some troops there." VOA



Democratic Republic of Congo's President Felix Tshisekedi

the Democratic Republic of Congo to help fight rebels in the country's east.

DRC President Felix Tshisekedi arrived in Botswana's capital on Tuesday and is expected to discuss details of the deployment with the regional bloc's leaders. He also will talk with Botswana's President Mokgweetsi Masisi.

Addressing the media at the end of a special SADC meeting in Windhoek, Namibia, Namibian President Hage Geingob said the

restore peace and stability in the eastern part of the country, particularly in light of the upcoming national elections scheduled for December 2023," said Geingob, who serves as chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Security and Defense.

Reading out the Windhoek Summit's resolution, SADC Executive Secretary Elias Magosi said the meeting resolved to send troops to the DRC to assist in ending hostilities.

"Summit approved the deployment of a SADC Force

Worshippers killed near Africa's oldest synagogue

Two worshippers and three security officers have been killed in a gun attack near Africa's oldest synagogue, on the Tunisian island of Djerba.

The attack took place during an annual pilgrimage to the island, which attracts Jewish visitors from Europe and Israel.

A guard reportedly shot dead his partner before opening fire on visitors and officers near the Ghriba synagogue before being killed himself.

His motivation was not clear.

The two dead worshippers were cousins.

They have been named by Israeli media as French national Benjamin Haddad, 42, and Aviel Haddad, 30, a

dual citizen of Tunisia and Israel.

"They were shot - murdered in cold blood. They were just in the car park and were supposed to go in, in front of the entrance for the security check," relative

Mordechai Madar told Israeli radio station 103FM.

Tunisia's former tourism minister René Trabelsi, who organised the pilgrimage and was inside at the time, said the two cousins had tried to hide behind a bus outside the synagogue, Reuters news agency reports. BBC



Ghriba synagogue (file image)

Sudanese Have Mixed Reactions to Peace Talks

KHARTOUM, SUDAN — Sudanese citizens are cautiously optimistic about the Saudi- and U.S.-brokered peace talks in Jeddah between their country's warring generals amid reports of a lull in the fighting.

But thousands of Sudanese are still trying to flee the country, and analysts are skeptical that any deal between the two sides will bring long-term peace.

The mediation talks continued for a third day Monday, with no word on whether the negotiations were making progress.

Representatives of the military and the Rapid Support Forces were invited to Jeddah to discuss a proposed cease-fire so humanitarian aid agencies can access people who are wounded, hungry or

watching the talks in Jeddah with a mix of hope and skepticism.

Sumeya Musa, who fled to Al Jazirah state from the violence in Khartoum, said she was optimistic that the talks would bear fruit and allow her to find a safe route to escape Sudan.

"Our hope from these talks is that the guns will be silenced and we move out of this country," she said. "Practically, we are suffering. We just want to see that airstrikes, bombing and guns stop for a while."

Another woman, Amira Saleh, arrived in Port Sudan a week ago and is living in an open area within the town.

Saleh said she doubted that the warring parties were ready to stop hostilities.

"There is no consensus among them, and they will not reach any agreement, or at least a basis to draw a road map that can take these talks to a stage of negotiations," she said.



People wait with their luggage at a bus stop in southern Khartoum

displaced after more than three weeks of fighting.

The Sudan Tribune reported Sunday that the army negotiators have made three demands: unconditional withdrawal of the Rapid Support Forces from Khartoum, an extension of a humanitarian truce, and the integration of the RSF into the Sudanese army within two years.

The newspaper said, "It's not clear how the RSF negotiators will respond to these demands."

Renewed gunfire

A truce between the sides remains officially in place, but eyewitnesses in Khartoum told VOA they heard renewed gunfire and an airstrike in the city Monday in and around the downtown area.

Sudanese citizens are

Sudanese writer Mekki Al Mograbi said that the majority of Sudanese citizens support the military and that there was no way they would allow the Rapid Support Forces to remain as a separate armed group.

He said he thought the only solution at the moment would be for the RSF to get a safe route and leave the city.

"Granting the Rapid Support Forces safe passage or their exit out of Khartoum could be a possible solution," he said.

An Arab foreign ministers summit on Sunday in Cairo called for a complete cease-fire in Sudan. The ministers also formed a committee to try to find a way to halt the fighting.

In a statement, the African Union urged parties to the conflict to immediately cease fire for humanitarian reasons and urgently open humanitarian corridors. VOA

EDITORIAL

COMMENTARY

By Antara Haldar

NEC should intervene now

The Lethal Price of Sweatshop Development

Reports of logistical breakdown in the ongoing Biometric Voter's Registration exercise in some parts of Lofa and Maryland Counties should draw the immediate attention of authorities of the National Elections Commission (NEC) in Monrovia. Reports indicate that eligible Liberians turning out to register specifically in Foya District, Lofa and some parts of Maryland are unable to do so because NEC staff on the ground face technical problems with their machines.

CAMBRIDGE - It has been ten years since an eight-story commercial building housing several textile factories on the outskirts of Dhaka, Bangladesh, collapsed on April 24, 2013. The collapse of Rana Plaza claimed the lives of 1,134 people and severely injured 2,000 more, most of them women.

Although the Rana Plaza disaster drew widespread condemnation and moral outrage, even from Pope Francis, little has been done in the past ten years to address the underlying issues that led to the collapse and its devastating human toll.

Last week, the national chairman of the opposition Unity Party (UP) Rev. Luther Tarpeh, drove to the headquarters of the NEC in Monrovia and filed an official complaint about the situation that he said is occurring in the district that is stronghold of his standard bearer, former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai. Rev. Tarpeh also spoke similar occurrence in Maryland County where solar panels, cameras and computers of NEC are reportedly malfunctioning.

It was the deadliest industrial disaster since the 1984 gas leak that killed more than 3,000 people in Bhopal, India, and the worst accident in the modern history of the textile industry. Thousands of workers were trapped beneath the rubble for several days, with many succumbing to hunger and dehydration while others resorted to drinking their own urine to survive.

For example, while the legally binding 2013 Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh was renewed in 2018 and has more than 200 signatories, several major companies, including Levi Strauss, Gap, Walmart, and Amazon, refused to get on board. Instead, they opted for the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety, a legally nonbinding corporate alternative that ended in 2018.

These developments are being corroborated by independent reporters on the ground with NEC staff in the counties unable to provide any immediate remedy unfortunately, instead, looking up to headquarters in Monrovia for solution.

The deaths were predictable and preventable. The building was constructed atop a filled-in pond using substandard materials, rendering it unable to support the weight of heavy machinery. The upper four floors were added illegally, further exacerbating its structural issues. Cracks in the building's walls were seen in the days before the collapse, leading to the evacuation of some floors. But the building's owner, Sohel Rana, insisted on business as usual. Under pressure from buyers to meet delivery targets, Rana threatened to withhold workers' wages (roughly \$38 per month) if they failed to report to work. For those who did, his building proved to be a death trap, collapsing in under 90 seconds.

While the Rana Plaza Arrangement - a fund set up by the International Labor Organization and multiple donors, NGOs, the Bangladeshi government, trade unions, and clothing brands - provided compensation for the survivors and victims' families, it was akin to putting a band-aid on a gangrenous wound. Despite some symbolic gestures of corporate social responsibility, workers in Bangladesh continue to face inadequate wages, unsafe working conditions, and unfair termination. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic may have left most even worse off, as brands currently pay lower prices for the same products.

The electoral commission transitioned from manual registration to biometric voter's registration process, but gadgets provided to staff in the fields are malfunctioning, sometimes for days, leaving citizens turning out for the exercise frustrated. This is happening so despite no extension of the BVR process by NEC.

It is tempting to dismiss the Rana Plaza disaster as just another example of the challenges, including corrupt governments and unregulated businesses, facing the developing world. But developed Western countries were just as complicit. The wreckage was littered with the labels of some of the world's top retailers and fashion brands. Benetton, Monsoon, Mango, Walmart, and Primark were among the 29 large retailers identified as having sourced inventory from the building's garment factories.

The story of Rana Plaza is not an isolated event but a microcosm of the abuse and exploitation endemic to globalized capitalism. Countries in the Global South are expected to overcome the legacy of colonialism and make up centuries of economic development in just a few decades. Many are attempting to do just that. Bangladesh, for example, has grown dramatically since gaining independence in 1971, largely owing to its position as the world's second-largest garment exporter.

It is unfair for innocent citizens who sincerely want to register in order to exercise their political franchise on polling day by voting candidates of their choice to face such problem. Similar experiences were recorded during Phase I of the BVR process, which left citizens complaining.

The fact is that sweatshops like Rana Plaza would not exist if the dynamics of international trade did not fuel a desperate race to the bottom as developing countries compete for foreign direct investment from multinational corporations. In Bangladesh, the lack of regulation has enabled low wages and exploitative working conditions that are comparable to modern slavery.

But the calculus of capitalism prioritizes aggregates and national economic performance over the equitable distribution of gains among and within countries. Markets can provide no redress for employers' disproportionate appropriation of earnings at the expense of their workers. To achieve a fairer distribution of wealth and resources, Adam Smith's invisible hand must be restrained through regulation and redistributive policies.

It is important that the NEC moves expeditiously to address the concerns raised by the UP chairman, Rev. Tarpeh, not only to ensure a smooth exercise, but to assure political parties and their leaders and other stakeholders that this is not deliberate, especially so when BVR is going on in districts where the ruling CDC commands significant support, while districts in which the opposition are said to be heavily concentrated face such challenge.

The organization of global supply chains, which employ more than 450 million people worldwide, both perpetuates this exploitation and helps to obscure its nature. By outsourcing jobs to developing countries, multinational firms can evade international labor standards and deprive workers of the rights and benefits accorded to direct employees. But this sleight of hand is not limited to the developing world. Exploitation is also rampant in the US garment industry, with workers in Los Angeles being paid as little as \$1.58 an hour. Even in the tech industry, workers are subjected to precarious working conditions and exploitative wages, as evidenced by conditions in Amazon fulfillment centers.

The power imbalance between developed and developing countries renders the theoretical foundations of the global capitalist paradigm as shaky as a sweatshop built on landfill. And, like Rana Plaza in its fateful last days, the cracks are starting to show, with rising inequality and looming climate threats undermining the system's fragile structure. But as Leonard Cohen famously put it, "There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." If we are wise, we will not ignore the cracks, and will see the light.

The NEC should leave no room for any suspicion or contention, as we move to the October 10th Presidential and General Elections by giving attention to problems coming from the field and addressing them promptly.

No complaint should be ignored no matter how insignificant, where it comes from or who is involved. Paying prompt attention would assure all sides, including the electorate, political parties, would-be Independent Candidates and other stakeholders that the NEC is on top of its game.

Antara Haldar, Associate Professor of Empirical Legal Studies at the University of Cambridge, is a visiting faculty member at Harvard University and the principal investigator on a European Research Council grant on law and cognition.

At the same time, we call for trust on all sides which will give the NEC time in addressing concerns coming out of the field. Lest we forget, this is the constituted body responsible for conduct of elections in Liberia.

It is important that all hands remain on deck, as we endeavor to have free, fair and transparent elections to further strengthen our emerging democracy for the benefit of the entire nation.

OP-ED

By James Manibah Pillar Head for Governance and Lenka Homolkova
Chief Technical Advisor for elections-UNDP Liberia

Fostering partnerships to promote press freedom during elections

Monrovia, Liberia; 09 May 2023: World Press Freedom Day marks its 30th anniversary this year. Its overarching theme “Shaping a Future of Rights: Freedom of expression as a driver for all other human rights” is important in Liberia, as its people go to the polls to select their representatives and the Head of State for the next six years. This year also marks 20 years of peace in Liberia; holding credible and transparent elections will be a critical milestone for consolidating the country's peace and stability. In this regard, the media has a critical role to play in ensuring inclusive, transparent, and credible elections, and in fulfilling one's right to vote, and be elected. The media is also catalytic in the realization of democracy and human rights, notably freedom of expression, and civic and political rights.

Protecting and promoting human rights and freedoms are at the heart of UNDP's work. The right to vote, right to information, and freedom of expression, amongst others, shape our electoral support to the government and people of Liberia. We recognize that freedom of expression and press freedom are enshrined in Liberia's Constitution and the country has come a long way to protect them, by enacting various laws including the 2018 press law which eliminated the crimes of sedition and defamation of the president. In many parts of the world, press freedom is often restricted for various reasons by State actors. Journalists themselves are often victims of violence just for doing their work. In undertaking their duties, journalists are often perceived as overstepping their boundaries and intruding into the space of politicians, law enforcement agents, electoral workers, and citizens. This creates tension, quarrels, and sometimes even violence.

The protection of journalists is the responsibility of the State and its institutions. This however is a mammoth task that requires many stakeholders to work together. Reinforcing freedom of the press during elections, UNDP has been exploring strategies to bring together security forces and journalists, whose roles are inextricably linked, but whose relationship is not always the easiest.

Security forces play a pivotal role in elections and press freedom. They should be at every polling station, and at every campaign event to mitigate against tensions. These same locations and events attract journalistic interest. Security forces are obligated to protect journalists and ensure they can freely access and disseminate information to the people of Liberia.

As elections are everybody's business, full, effective participation hinges on unhindered access to public information presented professionally and sensitively. As the pen is said to be mightier than the sword, the media have a duty to report electoral events truthfully, and objectively, carefully choosing words that calm tensions and diffuse violence; words that will build, and not destroy, Mama Liberia.

Law enforcement agencies, while maintaining public order, and acting in the interest of public safety, may in certain circumstances deny journalists access to events and persons that could provide the information they seek. This is where the Freedom of Information Act is critical in determining the delicate threshold, which must be respected by both the media and security forces.

Aware of these intricacies, and the need to foster freedom of the press and expression, especially during elections, UNDP together with national and international partners, particularly the National Elections Commission, the Peacebuilding Office, and Internews have convened meetings with both media and law enforcement agencies to strengthen a mutually beneficial working relationship ahead of the October elections. It was not an easy task but both parties agreed to rules of working together to protect the integrity of the electoral process, and media freedom.

This commitment is affirmed in joint media and law enforcement Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) signed last November by the joint security forces of Liberia, the Press Union of Liberia, and the Female Journalists Association of Liberia. The SOPs outline the roles and responsibilities of both media and law enforcement agencies during elections and are a critical milestone toward peaceful 2023 elections.

Building bridges between media and law enforcement agencies protects journalists and improves access to information on one hand while, on the other hand, it protects the integrity of the security forces and helps save them from misinformation. The SOPs protect media freedom and incorporate gender equality principles in recognition of the significant role women played in ending the Liberian civil war and continue to play in Liberian society. There is also a separate chapter dedicated to the protection of female journalists.

We are hopeful that the SOPs will enable media and security forces to discharge their election-related and other responsibilities in an effective, peaceful, and non-confrontational manner, mutually supporting each other's work for the good of the people of Liberia and the country. The aim is, in part, to minimize unprofessional media conduct and abuse of authority by the security forces that could lead to violence.

It is critical that the media always present accurate, verified information as disinformation and hate speech could also provoke violence. UNDP has partnered with a local NGO, Local Voices of Liberia to strengthen their fact-checking iVerify platform to combat mis/disinformation and hate speech. Everyone is encouraged to fact-check any doubtful information by visiting the Local Voices Liberia website [tps://localvoicesliberia.com/submit-a-story](https://localvoicesliberia.com/submit-a-story).

As we celebrate the press freedom gains in Liberia, we cannot over-emphasize the need for the media to adhere to their professional code of ethics to diffuse tensions and nurture Liberia's hard-won peace. We must also remind ourselves that my freedom of expression ends where your freedom of expression begins. Together, let us make every day count for credible elections in October.

OPINION

By Yu Yongding

The Road Back to Growth in China

BEIJING - According to China's National Bureau of Statistics, the economy grew by 4.5% year on year in the first quarter of 2023. While that hardly matches the robust growth of the pre-pandemic period, it did exceed market expectations. And with the right policies, China can do even better.

There is plenty of pessimism about China's economic prospects nowadays, with many warning - not without reason - that China has entered a deflationary period. In the first quarter of 2023, China's consumer price index (CPI) rose by only 1.3% year on year - down from 1.8% in the previous quarter. More striking, China's producer price index (PPI) fell by 2.5% year on year in March - its sixth consecutive month of decline.

This is not a new trend. In fact, China's PPI has been negative for the better part of the last decade. Beginning in March 2012, China's PPI was in negative territory for 54 consecutive months. In January 2019, it turned negative again - and remained so for 17 months. While CPI has remained positive, it has grown by less than 2% annually, on average, for a decade.

While claims that China has entered a deflationary period are excessive, the data indicate that China's economy continues to be hamstrung by low effective demand. Official figures also support the claim that China's GDP growth has been below potential for some time.

This may not have been surprising when the zero-COVID policy was triggering regular lockdowns, including in economic hubs like Shanghai. But the abandonment of strict pandemic-containment policies in December was widely expected to unleash pent-up demand, leading to a robust recovery. Some even warned that inflation could spike, as supply struggled to keep up.

None of this came to pass. Non-economic factors - linked, for example, to global geopolitical tensions - bear some of the blame. But, in my view, one of the most important reasons for China's weaker-than-expected economic performance since December is the government's overly cautious approach to macroeconomic policy, particularly fiscal policy.

China's government has set a growth target of “around 5%” for 2023. For an economy that grew by 6.7%, 6%, 2.2%, and 8.1% in 2018-21, that is simply too low. A better approach would aim for 6% growth - an entirely feasible target, given China's recent performance. While the government's reluctance to aim for a higher growth rate is understandable, a conservative target can create a self-fulfilling prophecy, by weakening confidence and failing to exploit growth potential fully.

Some policy interventions, such as cash transfers, would provide a direct and immediate boost to consumption, which accounted for 54.3% of GDP in 2021 and had been the main contributor to GDP growth for years before 2022. But, as China's government well knows, consumption is a function of income; a sustained, broad-based increase in incomes depends on economic growth; and infrastructure investment is traditionally the state's most effective instrument for boosting growth when effective demand is weak. Despite past investments, China still has a large infrastructure gap that urgently needs to be closed.

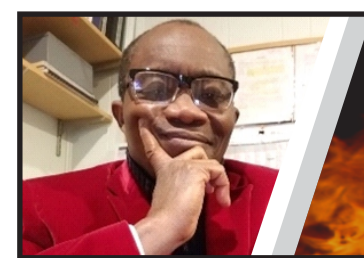
There are risks to this approach. As China learned when it implemented a CN¥4 trillion (\$578 billion) stimulus package during the 2008 global economic crisis, large-scale public investment in infrastructure can lead to an increase in local-government debts, ultimately undermining financial stability.

But rather than discourage state-led infrastructure investment, this experience should motivate policymakers to engage in more careful planning that avoids creating additional “white elephants.” It should also spur changes to how the government finances its investments.

China's authorities have historically been very reluctant to run budget deficits. As a result, the vast majority of funding for past infrastructure investments has been raised by local governments on capital markets at high interest rates. Spending by the central government accounted for perhaps less than 1% of total infrastructure investment in 2021. Small wonder local governments are weighed down by debt.

For the next round of infrastructure investment, the central government should contribute a significantly larger share of funding. At the same time, it should step in to help local governments resolve their debt problems. This will require the central government both to increase its budget deficit (as a share of GDP) and to sell more government bonds to the public in 2023.

Barring a “black swan” event, China can achieve 6% GDP growth this year, thereby ending a 12-year slowdown. But this will not happen on its own. Carefully planned and prudently funded infrastructure investment, supported by expansionary fiscal policy, is essential.



LIBERIA POLITICAL HOT-FIRE

By Jones Mallay

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“It Is Finished...”

John 19:30 tells us that "when Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, 'It is finished,'" and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit" Jesus went on to say to his mother: "Woman, behold your son" ... and to John: "Behold your mother." To God, his Father: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" To all: "I thirst." To the world: "It is finished."

Yes, it was finished with Jesus, but today it is finished for Amb. Joseph Boakia in many political dimensions within the scope of the Liberian political landscape. These biblical narratives about Jesus resonate with Amb: Joseph Nyumah Boakai, standard bearer of the Boakai's wing of the Unity Party, B-UP. There are three critical elements in Jesus' narratives that are vivid in JNB's political career. Those key phrases are: "It is finished," "My God, my God," and "Father why forsaken me." When Jesus gave up the Ghost, it was finished for the world. His Ghost never returns to Him up to today's date.

So, it is with JNB and his quicksand political career which by all sensitive political indications is finally finished, owing to the terrible acrimonious unfolding political events that occurred just under a week ago, all of which have created enormous animosities for the 78-year-old fragile politician.

JNB's political life was finished when he brokered political ranks with Sen. Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, Liberty Party, Political Leader of the Nyonblee wing of the LP, (N-LP); Benoni Wilfred Urey, Flagbearer All Liberian Party (ALP); Henry Pedro Costa, political guide man of JNB; and Ellen-Johnson's wing of the Unity Party (E-UP) purposely for picking Senator Jeremiah Kpan Koung who is believed to be Sen Johnson personal hand-made VP to JNB.

JNB didn't just break rank with his old political allies; they have all become staunch and fearless political enemies. None of them attended his ceremony, nor congratulated him either. Still, JNB seems happy and comfortable with recent political events, which might either end his political career or retain his political future for the better.

"When our Lord Jesus said, "my God, my God." This narrative indirectly expresses the deep dismay at what may have unfolded within the 11th hour leading to the 2023 general and presidential elections. JNB allies are dismayed over the news of Sen. Koung for three reasons. The Koung factor was relatively a new scenario to all of the JNB's allies. Second, Sen. Jonson brokered a deal with JNB, not the Boakai wing of the Unity Party according to sources. That deal was brokered overnight, something that was quick and surprising to all JNB allies.

Thirdly, JNB as a wise man didn't care how his political allies felt about his deal with Sen. Johnson. JNB didn't care whether his decision had the potential to end his political career despite the widespread outcry from countless political circles within just a few more months to the 2023 elections.

JNB allies turned foes are engaged in a terrible blame game currently, which may not be healthy for JNB's political career. Assuming JNB's antagonists go on the political attack at him during the 2023 campaign seasons, the question becomes can JNB survive? If, for any reason, Henry Pedro Costa, the guide man to JNB decides to go on the attack, JNB's political career could be broken before JNB even reaches the 2023 elections. Henry Pedro Costa has carried so much about JNB in his political closet about JNB that the public doesn't really know. And it appears the opposition blocks have lost the 2023 elections war but won the headlines in the various newspapers.

When our Lord Jesus said: "Why forsaken me." Indeed, Jesus was referring to God, His Father in the heavens, who should have rescued Jesus from the hands of Jesus' foes, but God turned Him down. So, it is in the same token with the opposition and JNB.

The oppositions and JNB allies turned enemies felt that JNB did forsake them when they needed him most to make his pick within the rank and file of the CPP despite their lukewarm relationships and those JNB may have had any form of political link with directly or indirectly. But in all circumstances, the opposition felt let down terribly.

Is JB's pick of Sen Koung worth the temptation he is experiencing with his allies turned, enemies? The burden of justifications is now on the political shoulders of Sen. Koung to prove to JNB's adversaries and opposition elites that he is the man of the hour to put JNB in the executive mansion. Sen. Koung will need to deliver to showcase that in the absence of JNB political foes, he has the political magic charms to make JNB the next president of Liberia at all costs in 2023.

It is never a good idea in politics to make political enemies in the 11th hour of electioneering seasons, which JNB has just done in his political career. However, some political pundits believe that this maybe the beginning of the end of JNB's 40-year political career if they lose the 2023 elections.

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS



The Gaye, Ghon-tay, Johnson and Gaywepue families announce with profound regrets the death of their son, brother, husband ,father, uncle and grand-father **CAPTAIN HARRY JIMMY GHON-TAY**

This sad event occurred on May 5th 2023 at the SAINT-LUC HOSPITAL in BRUSSELS while en-route to Liberia from the United states of America after a protracted period of illness.

CAPTAIN HARRY JIMMY GHON-TAY leaves to mourn, his beautiful daughters **MERCY GHON-TAY, FAITH GHON-TAY KONAH, JOSEPHINE GHON-TAY , PRECIOUS GHON-TAY , HARIETTE GHON-TAY, AMINATA DIAKITE. LOVETEE DAUDA, IRENE DAUDA ,** his son **HARRY JIMMY GHON-TAY JR** and grandchildren: **HARRY FORD ,DERRICK KONAH, CALVIN KONAH, DIAMOND KONAH, LAMAR SAMUEL, LAUREATTA SAMUEL ,HARRIS GHON-TAY, LELAH GHON-TAY and FAVOR GHON-TAY**

CAPTAIN GHON-TAY the deceased is also survived by his sisters **MARTHA PAYE , BEATRICE GAYE ,** his brothers : **PATRICK BOAKAI and MICHAEL mcCURRIE** and a host of cousins, nieces, nephews , in-laws and friends in and out of Liberia.

Funeral arrangements will be announced later.

This announcement was brought in by his niece Hon.Patience Lawson and the entire

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Koung rejects burden of campaign finance

By Lewis S. Teh

Am. Joseph Nyumah Boakai's running mate Senator Jeremiah Koung has rejected speculations that will finance his ticket's entire campaign because his boss has no money.

Interviewed on Spoon FM, the Nimba Senator said it's unfortunate for people to say

hailing from a vote-rich county. It is alleged that the former vice president is not financially strong to fund his campaign, though such a claim remains unverified.

On the radio program, Mr. Koung was quizzed about what he is bringing to the table on the ticket with Boakai.

In response, Koung said by spending twelve years in the

selling in the streets.

Through the civil conflicts, he said he didn't partake in the crisis and he never held a gun.

Instead, the Nimba Senator said he's been a business person all his life.

"I got elected in 2012, it was a new terrain entering government," he said.

"In fact, this was my first job outside of being a business person who came from the private sector."

Boakai's running mate said he built for himself a company and became its Chief Executive Officer with over a hundred employees working in it.

"I come with the true Liberian story: the guys who [are] driving taxis, selling on the streets, the people selling gas on the sidewalk. I come with their stories," said Mr. Koung.

According to him, he represents the story of people that are selling under difficult circumstances.

The Nimba Senator stated that he represents that woman who will cook by 8 pm for her children, adding that he understands the Liberian story and he is that story.

"Working in government and everyone I understand that very well. And when it comes to solutions for Liberia, if I were asked by Ambassador Boakai to make recommendations on every sector of the economy, I'm ready and prepared to give my advice. If taken, then we can turn this country around," he continued.

Legislature, he thinks he carries a wealth of experience.

"I come with both the private and public experience. Not just that, but understanding it from the bottom," he said.

He described the Legislature as the nucleus of the government, adding that if the government was a corporation, the Legislature would have been the board of directors.

He narrated how he began living on his own at age 12,



Senator Jeremiah Koung

he will finance the entire campaign because Mr. Boakai does not have money.

Following years of failed public recommendations for Mr. Boakai to pair with former Coca-Cola executive Mr. Alexander B. Cummings to form an opposition ticket, Boakai picked Mr. Koung last month as his running mate.

There is a public perception that Mr. Koung has some financial strength that could boost Boakai's campaign in addition to

West Point, New Kru Town benefit US\$200,000 -MCC reveals

By Lewis S. Teh

The Monrovia City Corporation says it has secured US\$200,000 from the mayor's migration council with support from global fund to fight climate change and climate resilience in West Point Township and New Kru Town, two densely populated electoral districts within Montserrado County.

Providing an overview at the official launch of the Mongrow project, an employee of the Monrovia City Corporation, Fayiah A. Yonda said the process leading to the launch began several years back when climate change and climate resilience including sea erosion destroyed lives and properties, which led Mayor Jefferson Kojjee to appeal to international partners for

assistance.

According to Mr. Yonda, following the appeal by Mayor Kojjee, Liberia was given an opportunity and the Mongrow Project was contested for by over 200 cities out of which only five cities became successful, including Monrovia.

"Today, we want to inform our people that this is designed to target climate change and climate resilience", adding that it is also designed to have over

20,000 trees planted across the coastal belt, including the Japan Freeway.

"We all know how disaster has destroyed our various communities, and the mayor was asked to select two communities that will benefit from the project; it's against this backdrop that West Point and New Kru Town were selected as two beneficiary communities" Mr. Yonda adds.



LBA inducts new corps of officers

By: Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

Members of the Liberia Bankers Association (LBA) have inducted in office new corps of officials to steer the affairs of the Association.

Those inducted are Mr. Olalekan Balogun (Global Bank Liberia Limited) President; Mr. Henry F. Saamoi (International Bank) Vice President; and Mr. Robert Nkous (Afriland First Bank) Secretary-General.

Newly installed President Olalekan Balogun, reiterates his commitment to improving welfare of the Association.

Mr. Balogun expresses confident of seeing commercial banks in the country compete with other banking institutions.

He commends his predecessor and members of the Association for electing him president to take the LBA to the next level.

Mensah-Asante, for his contributions to the growth and development of the Association and the banking sector in the country.

Mr. Mensah-Asante served as president of the LBA for almost two consecutive years (2022-2023) and will officially be retiring from the Liberian banking sector.

In his farewell speech held in Monrovia recently, he recounted successes under his administration especially, in the general payment system of Liberia and implementation of the financial inclusion strategy launched in December 2019.

He challenged the newly inducted President, Mr. Olalekan Balogun, to do his best in improving the sector.

"As I handed over the mantle of authority to a colleague, Mr. Olalekan Balogun, an experienced banker in marketing, who has worked both in Liberia and Ghana, I



"The former president did a very good job and now it is left with me to fill that gap. If we don't make any impact then that means we are retrogressing," Mr. Balogun notes.

According to him, the job has been done already as far he is concerned.

Mr. Balogun acknowledges there are challenges facing the banking sector of Liberia, pointing to the economy and advocacy as key to those hurdles, but emphasizes a need for the Association to engage in advocacy as paramount to the industry in Liberia.

"I have the opportunity of working in three geographical locations, including Nigeria, Liberia, and Ghana. So, if I don't bring in new innovation in how we do things in Liberia, then I will fail you while in this position", he says.

He assures members of the Association and in the banking sector that they will see a lot of changes under his regime.

Meanwhile, members of the Liberia Bankers Association (LBA) have honored and bided farewell to the former president and managing director, George

look forward to him taking the LBA to the next level," he says.

The former LBA president continued that though he may no longer be with the Association, his wish is to see commercial banks in Liberia compete with other banks to ensure that they can match with commercial banks in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria.

"We are in a country where cash is very essential in our daily lives, as it remains the most widely used means of payment (both LRD and USD). Most account holders at commercial banks pay utility bills, school fees, and other general financial transactions in cash.

We all know the benefits of digital payments, so I am urging all banks to consider deploying the necessary digital payment platforms to assist their customers", Mr. Mensah-Asante says.

He also urges members of the LBA to continue to work collaboratively with relevant state institutions, including the central bank, to explore ways of improving the important role of financial intermediation as well as introduction of modern forms of

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Police arrest 3 teenagers for digging out human skull

By Patrick N. Mensah
Maryland County

Police in Harper City, Maryland County have arrested and incarcerated three teenagers for allegedly digging out a human skull from a grave.

They were taken to the Commissioner of the Hoffman Station Township and later turned over to the Liberian National Police (LNP) for further interrogation.

While at the Harper police station, the three suspects narrated that the act was

visited a graveyard and dug the skull in question. Satia claimed that they placed the skull at the back of their bathroom.

During the morning hours, he alleged, one of his co-suspects took the skull and used it to run behind other children in the yard in an attempt to frighten them.

Satia admitted that it wasn't a good thing to have removed the skull from the grave, but they intended to scare the young ones and their friends in the community.

"Let me explain this, we were eating on Friday night when this bad mindset came to me," he explained.

"So I explained it to my friends and they [bought] the idea because we just wanted to scare people, but never knew it would have reached this far," he said further.

The three suspects pleaded for mercy, stressing that their action wasn't intended for anything different, but just to scare their friends in the community.

For his part, commissioner Prowd of the Hoffman Station Township said the action of the teenagers is not only worrisome but discouraging.

He wondered why on earth children at that age would even think of going to a gravesite

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Youth Media Action launches manual for student journalists

By Ethel A. Tweh

Youth Media Action (YMA) an advocacy group has launched a Youth Journalism Manual in Monrovia.

Executive Director, Varmah Karama, says the manual will be used to train and enhance the media skills of cub reporters and create a multiply effect on professional journalism in Liberia.

Speaking at the launch Tuesday, May 9, Varmah noted that the manual will be used to teach journalism as an elective subject in Liberian schools and that it will be distributed throughout all 15 counties of Liberia.

According to him, it will provide for young people a firm journalism background through training and media exposure for professional journalism.

He observes that lack of

helps them to develop teamwork through collaboration.

"A Manual contains information that you need to either transform something into a workable tool or it serves as a guide into how you do something, which is referred to as the training. In order to successfully apply a new idea or strategy, you will need a guide to help you get started. The skills you learn as a result of training, helps you to better disseminate information for others to understand. Journalism is also an art that you can use to express yourselves; ask the right questions; speak clearly; probe deeper into issues that require clarity." She adds.

According to her, the advantage one gets into becoming professionals in journalism is much more beneficial when you start early as a youth.

She says that some of the best journalists today started from



The three suspects are identified as Alphonso Nevis, aged 14, George Satia, aged 14, and Hilary Prowd, aged 16.

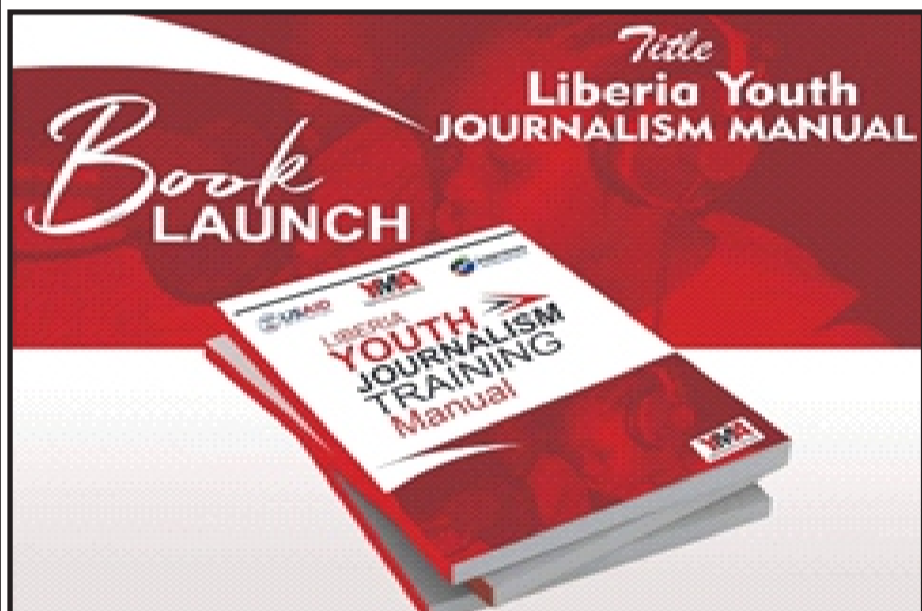
They were arrested by the Hoffman Station's Community Watch Forum in the Hoffman Station Township for allegedly digging a grave and removing a human skull in Harper City, Maryland County Electoral District #1.

allegedly done not for any rituals.

They claimed it was intended to have scared some of their friends in the community.

According to suspect George Satia, they were eating on Friday, 5 May 2023 when he conceived the idea and he shared his thought with his co-suspects.

Accordingly, they allegedly



"COVID-19 is no longer Public Health emergency"

-Dr. Clement Peter

By Ethel A. Tweh

The Country Representative of the World Health Organization to Liberia, Dr. Clement Peter has disclosed that COVID-19 pandemic is no longer a public health emergency of international concern.

Dr. Peter told a news conference Wednesday in Monrovia that the International Health Regulation Emergency Committee on COVID-19 met for the fifth time on May 4, 2023.

He added that after the meeting, the Committee issued a statement on May 5, 2023, advising the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General that the pandemic is no longer considered a global health concern.

Dr. Peter stressed that the global risk assessment of COVID-19 remains high, but there is evidence of reducing risks to human health.

According to him, the Committee members

highlighted some key criteria to reach its decisions, including the decreasing trend in COVID-19 deaths.

He also named a decline in COVID-19 related hospitalizations and ICU admissions. According to him, the circulating variants are not associated with increased disease severity and high levels of population immunity to SARS-CoV-2 from infection, vaccination, or both.

At the same time, the WHO Country Representative to Liberia said the Emergency Committee considered three reasons to conclude that COVID-19 no longer constitutes

a public health emergency of international concern

He recounted that COVID-19 was declared a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) on January 30, 2020, and characterized as a pandemic in March of the same year.

According to Dr. Clement Peter, COVID-19 is now an established and ongoing health issue.

Meanwhile, the WHO through its Country Representative to Liberia has encouraged countries to implement some essential recommendations.



Dr. Clement Peter

handbook or resource materials to guide high school journalism, and that too much complex information is given by different trainers on the same topic, but the manual will help guide trainers.

The Chief of Party of Internews Liberia, Lien Bach, who launched the Manual, thanked the YMA for such initiative, noting that anyone who goes through the book will be on top of his game in journalism.

She said a lot of things are mentioned in the manual that can make a person pursuing a career in Journalism, a good journalist, adding that it helps one to become both a print and electronic journalist.

Serving as a proxy for keynote speaker Eva Flomo, Olive Thomas of ECOWAS Radio describes Youth Journalism as an essential element for professionalism.

Olive continues that its provides an opportunity for young people to be creative, learn new technical skills, set up projects, confront their own feelings, fears and biases about issues or their environment, and

press clubs in high schools and through the years were able to allow themselves to grow in the profession, noting that you learn the interviewing techniques that will give you answers you seek - be it in electronic or broadcasting.

"As Youth Media Action launches the 'Liberia Youth Journalism Training Manual' today, we are hopeful that young journalists or journalism students will focus their primary attention on learning the basics in the trade, which will help to equip you for the world and the job market. And with social media at your disposal to make journalism thrive and enhance your creativity, you are headed for professionalism devoid of harassment, blackmail, intimidation and mediocrity. Take this manual as your guide and you will have no regrets", Olive urges.

Press Union of Liberia controversial president-elect, Daniel Nyakonah says there is no other time to pay attention to young people like now, rallying fellow media colleagues to innovate ways to contribute to every sector of the country, and that journalism in Liberia is all time low with people who hardly read or write scripts on radio stations and at newspaper offices.

Français

La NEC met en garde les candidats contre la violation du code électoral sous peine de sanctions sévères

La Commission électorale nationale (NEC) somme les partis politiques d'enlever tout ce qui est matériel de campagne, à savoir les dépliants et les panneaux d'affichage érigés aux coins des rues ou les jingles diffusés à la radio et à la

les panneaux d'affichage, affiches, bannières, jingles, pièces de théâtre, paroles et autres formes d'accessoires promotionnels qui peuvent être considérés comme une pré-campagne.

Elle a indiqué que le non-respect de ce mandat entraînerait de graves conséquences pour les

appelant les citoyens à s'inscrire pour participer à l'élections.

Selon elle, la Commission a commencé à documenter les violations des règlements de campagne depuis le 5 mai 2023. Elle a expliqué que lors de la récente réunion d'échange d'informations du Comité consultatif interpartis (GIEC), la NEC a réaffirmé sa détermination inébranlable à appliquer les directives révisées et publiées de 2023 sur les campagnes. Elle a informé tous les partis politiques, les coalitions, les alliances et les aspirants potentiels enregistrés que à partir du 5 mai, la commission commencera à documenter les violations des directives et appliquera les actions appropriées en cas de violation des règles de jeu.

Lors de cette réunion, dit-elle, la commission a également réitéré que la période de campagne pour les élections présidentielles et législatives de 2023 est du 5 août au 8 octobre 2023. Elle a averti en outre que toute activité de campagne effectuée avant la période de campagne officielle est considérée comme une pré-campagne, passible d'une amende d'au moins 1 000 USD ou supérieure à 5 000 USD ou son équivalent en dollars libériens.

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télévision. Les partis politiques ont jusqu'au 15 mai pour enlever tout ce matériel.

La présidente de la NEC Davidetta Browne Lansannah, au cours d'une conférence de presse au siège de la Commission à Sinkor, Monrovia, a mis en garde contre la violation du code électoral.

La présidente Lansannah a demandé que l'on retire tous

personnes impliquées, en particulier lors du processus de nomination des candidats, qui se déroule du 14 juin au 14 juillet 2023.

En violation de la loi électorale, les candidats à travers le pays, y compris le président sortant George Manneh Weah, ont érigé des panneaux d'affichage, des affiches, des bannières et des dépliants avec leurs photographies à travers Monrovia et d'autres parties du pays,

Le sort des femmes du Sud-Est attriste la vice-présidente Taylor

La vice-présidente Jewel Howard-Taylor a exprimé sa tristesse et son profond regret face au fait qu'aucune femme du sud-est du Libéria ne siège au parlement libérien, contrairement aux autres régions du pays.

La vice-présidente Taylor croit que si les défis auxquels les femmes du sud-est du pays sont confrontées continuent de rester sans réponse et continuent de s'intensifier, c'est parce qu'aucune femme de cette partie du pays n'est ni députée ni sénatrice pour faire avancer leurs problèmes au parlement afin que cela fasse l'objet de discussion.

La vice-présidente libérienne a dit travailler avec plusieurs organisations de femmes pour qu'elles encouragent davantage de femmes à s'intéresser à la politique, car il est temps

que les femmes soient prêtes à participer au processus politique et fassent en sorte que ce dont elles ont besoin soit mis en œuvre.

Au cours d'un entretien avec un groupe de journalistes au ministère des Affaires Etrangères en début de semaine, Madame Howard - Taylor s'est dite

attristée par le fait qu'aucune femme du sud-est du Libéria ne siège au parlement libérien en tant que Représentante ou Sénatrice. Selon elle, chaque fois qu'elle se rend dans cette partie du pays, les femmes ne

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 09



Éditorial

Le passeport diplomatique libérien aux mains des criminels

Les passeports diplomatiques libériens officiels ont perdu leur valeur sous l'administration Weah à tous égards. Ce qui est censé être un document sacré est traité comme du papier hygiénique. Il se trouve maintenant entre les mains de criminels et de fraudeurs purs et durs. C'est une honte pour la République.

La dernière affaire en date concernerait l'arrestation d'un homme d'affaires libérien bien connu aux États-Unis pour fraude électronique présumée d'un montant total de plus de 7 millions de dollars. Le suspect Sheik Bassirou Kante aurait des liens étroits avec la vice-présidente libérienne Jewel Howard Taylor.

Ce qui est peut-être le plus honteux dans cette affaire, c'est que Cheikh Kante, qui ne travaille pas pour le gouvernement libérien, porte un passeport diplomatique libérien dans ses activités criminelles présumées, se présentant comme un diplomate du Libéria.

Cela soulève plus de questions que de réponses : Comment a-t-il obtenu le passeport diplomatique libérien ? Qui le lui a délivré ? La vice-présidente Taylor est-elle au courant et depuis combien de temps qu'il porte de manière douteuse ce passeport diplomatique, exerçant son métier de criminel ? Il pourrait s'agir de questions auxquelles le public pourrait chercher des réponses.

Mais le problème des passeports diplomatiques libériens qui se retrouvent entre les mains des criminels n'est pas nouveau. En septembre 2020, l'ancien secrétaire d'État américain Michael R. Pompeo sous l'administration Trump a interdit à l'ancien directeur libérien des passeports Andrew Wonplo et à sa famille immédiate de se rendre en Amérique "en raison de son implication dans une corruption importante" liée à la fraude du passeport qui a sapé l'état de droit, réduit la confiance du public libérien dans la gestion des documents d'identité et de voyage par le gouvernement actuel et compromis l'intégrité et la sécurité des processus d'immigration.

L'enquête des enquêteurs sur le scandale à l'époque a abouti à des accusations portées contre Wonplo et un accusé nigérian Adedoyin Emmanuel Atiro qui se présentait comme une autorité du ministère libérien des Affaires étrangères et offrait des opportunités de voyage et recevait de l'argent de ses victimes.

Dans cette dernière affaire selon FrontPageAfrica, Sheik Kante, communément connu au Libéria sous le nom de Royal Gold, a été arrêté à son domicile aux États-Unis le 20 avril et par la suite accusé de complot de blanchiment d'argent quelques heures avant son départ prévu de l'aéroport international de Dulles à Washington aux Emirats Arabes Unis.

Ce qui est encore plus dégoûtant, c'est que ceux qui détiennent illégalement des passeports diplomatiques libériens ont généralement des liens avec de hauts responsables du gouvernement libérien, comme dans ce cas, avec la vice-présidente Taylor, ce qui laisse place aux soupçons.

Alors que le suspect Kante est sous la garde des États-Unis, face à un interrogatoire, la vice-présidente du Libéria doit tout faire immédiatement pour se disculper ou pour dire ce qu'elle sait sur le passeport diplomatique que détient un homme d'affaires libérien ordinaire avec lequel elle aurait des liens.

C'est important non seulement pour l'intégrité personnelle de la vice-présidente que les Libériens tiennent en très haute estime, mais aussi pour l'image de cette administration et du pays tout entier.

Français

La NEC met en garde les candidats

Pendant ce temps, Madame la première phase, la Lansannah a déclaré que la Commission a immédiatement phase II de l'inscription après, acheté à l'échelle biométrique des électeurs de 2023 à Bong, Grand Gedeh, rubans supplémentaires pour la Grand Kru, Lofa, Maryland, phase deux de l'exercice, qui Nimba, River Gee, River Cess et sont arrivés dans le pays la Sinoe a commencé le 21 avril semaine dernière et ont été 2023 comme prévu, avec 1 015 immédiatement déployés sur le centres d'inscription réparties terrain.

Selon elle, les premières indications du personnel sur le terrain montrent que le processus se déroule dans son ensemble dans le calme. Elle a fait valoir que, comme dans le cas de la phase un, les commissaires et le personnel de la NEC utilisent une approche holistique et coordonnée pour s'assurer que le processus reste sur la bonne voie.

« À cette fin, les équipes techniques de la NEC, LAXTON et Neurotechnology ont mis en place des mécanismes de réponse rapide pour résoudre les problèmes. Par cette approche holistique coordonnée, nous relevons les défis sur le terrain », a dit la patronne de la NEC.

Elle a reconnu qu'il y a eu quelques défis dans certains centres, tels que : la détérioration des rubans en raison de l'application de mauvaises procédures d'impression, ce qui endommage également les cartes et produits de nettoyage résultant d'une demande accrue de rubans et de cartes, ce, malgré la perspective générale positive du processus dans la phase deux, comme prévu.

Madame Lansannah dit que pour résoudre ce problème, qui a également été observé lors de

la première phase, la Commission a immédiatement après, acheté à l'échelle internationale des cartes et des rubans supplémentaires pour la phase deux de l'exercice, qui sont arrivés dans le pays la semaine dernière et ont été immédiatement déployés sur le terrain.

De même, elle a expliqué que le matériel excédentaire que disposaient certains centres d'inscription des électeurs a été redistribué vers des centres qui n'en disposaient pas assez. Elle a en outre indiqué que même les quelques centres qui ont connu ces difficultés d'impression et de délivrance de cartes d'électeur sur place, ont poursuivi l'inscription des Libériens éligibles, avec l'assurance de délivrer ces cartes à une date ultérieure.

« Les cartes d'électeur de ces inscrits sont en cours d'impression et de délivrance. La Commission assure que tous les inscrits qui n'ont pas reçu leurs cartes sur place les recevront avant le début de l'exposition le 12 juin 2023. Les équipes magistrales font des heures supplémentaires pour s'assurer que tous les Libériens inscrits reçoivent leurs cartes d'électeur.

Le président Lansannah a ajouté que pour résoudre les problèmes de fonctionnement de l'équipement, LAXTON et Neurotechnology ont fourni par avion des pièces de rechange pour les machines, et les techniciens réparent et redéployent les machines en temps réel pour poursuivre le processus d'inscription des électeurs.

Le sort des femmes

font que se plaindre de ne pas avoir ce dont elles ont besoin.

« Qui pour parler au nom des femmes du sud-est sur des questions dont seules les femmes peuvent parler ? », s'est-elle demandée.

Pour elle, il est temps que les femmes du sud-est du Libéria commencent à regarder où elles se trouvent et qui elles devraient soutenir afin qu'il y ait plus de représentation des femmes à l'Assemblée législative.

La vice-présidente Howard - Taylor a exhorté les jeunes à voter pour leurs mères qui ressentent la douleur des jeunes.

Selon elle, les femmes doivent également comprendre que lorsqu'une femme se trouve à un poste de responsabilité, elle porte la voix du reste des femmes, qu'elles le veuillent ou non. Elle a supplié les femmes de se donner la main et de se

soutenir mutuellement.

« Je pense que maintenant, comme nous l'avons fait en 2005 et 20011 pour élire l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf, il faut que nous retournions à la cage de départ pour commencer le même plan afin que chaque comté ait au moins une femme au parlement », a-t-elle dit.

Elle croit que si les femmes se serrent la main et encouragent davantage de femmes à participer à la compétition politique en veillant à ce que chaque comté ait une législatrice, les problèmes auxquels les femmes sont confrontées seront résolus.

Elle s'est également dite attristée par le fait qu'il n'y a plus de représentants jeunes, car tous ceux qui étaient des jeunes à la Chambre des représentants sont maintenant dans la quarantaine.

Procès du 28-septembre en Guinée : la version de Moussa Tiegboro Camara remise en cause



Au procès du massacre du stade de Conakry, les parties civiles sont entendues depuis le mois de février. Parmi les 11 accusés de la répression qui s'est abattue sur l'opposition le 28 septembre 2009 faisant plus de 150 morts, Moussa Tiegboro Camara a été particulièrement mis en cause au cours des dernières audiences. À l'époque des faits, il était secrétaire d'État chargé de la lutte contre la drogue et le crime organisé.

Dans son récit, face à la cour, Tiegboro s'était donné le beau rôle. En octobre dernier, il avait nié toute participation au massacre, affirmant au contraire avoir sauvé certains leaders : « Monsieur Abdoulaye Bah, savez-vous que votre témoignage bat en brèche l'idée d'un quelconque sauvetage de leaders par le commandant Tiegboro et autres. »

« Matés au stade »

Celui qui remet en cause la version de Tiegboro, c'est Abdoulaye 3 Bah, garde du corps du leader de l'UFDG, Cellou Dalein Diallo à l'époque des faits. Mardi, il était interrogé par les avocats des parties civiles : « Est-ce que les leaders politiques n'avaient pas été matés au stade ? ». « Au stade, il a vu les leaders de l'opposition être roués de coups par les

bérets rouges, sous le regard impassible de Moussa Tiegboro Camara », dit-il en pular, pendant qu'un interprète assure la traduction en français.

Confrontations

« Vous avez également déclaré que les hommes de Tiegboro lui obéissaient quand il leur donnait des ordres, oui ou non ? ». Ce à quoi l'ancien responsable a répondu : « Lui seul pouvait sauver tous les leaders et que personne ne soit battu ».

Après les parties civiles, les témoins seront appelés à la barre, viendra ensuite le temps des confrontations. Tiegboro aura l'occasion de répondre à ces accusations.

Côte d'Ivoire : Chantal Nanaba Camara nommée présidente du Conseil constitutionnel

Composé de sept membres, le Conseil constitutionnel est l'organe régulateur du fonctionnement des pouvoirs publics. Sur le plan politique, elle aura notamment pour rôle de veiller à la conformité des scrutins présidentiels et parlementaires.

Le président ivoirien, Alassane Ouattara, a nommé mardi 9 mai par décret Chantal Nanaba Camara à la tête du Conseil constitutionnel. À 69 ans, elle a le rang de « magistrat hors hiérarchie ». Cette femme respectée a un parcours sans faute : première femme à avoir présidé la Cour de cassation, première femme à la tête du Conseil supérieur de la magistrature... Cette juge a par ailleurs été décorée de l'Ordre national de la Côte d'Ivoire par Alassane Ouattara.

Son prédécesseur, Mamadou Koné, avait prêté serment à ce poste le 12 mars 2015, après la démission de Francis Wodié. Il avait assuré l'intérim pendant deux ans, avant d'être nommé à ce poste pour un mandat de six ans.

Chantal Camara prendra ses fonctions à partir du 21 juillet. D'ici



là, trois autres conseillers seront aussi nommés. Le Conseil constitutionnel, composé de sept membres, sera ainsi totalement renouvelé.

Veiller à la conformité des scrutins

Côté politique, cette instance aura notamment pour rôle de valider les candidatures à la présidentielle de 2025, de veiller à la conformité de ce scrutin et de proclamer les résultats définitifs de cette élection.

« Chantal Camara a fait ses preuves en tant que magistrate », relève le politologue Geoffroy Julien Kouao. « Pourra-t-elle se détacher le moment venu, pour ne dire que le droit ? », s'interroge ce chercheur.

LIBERIANS DEBATE

By Naneka A. Hoffman

Topic: Politics

Former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai of the Unity Party recently named Nimba County Senator Jeremiah Kpan Koung as his running mate for the pending elections. Senator Koung is from the Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction (MDR) party of kingmaker, Senator Prince Y. Johnson, who ended a marriage with President George Weah. But the Boakai-Koung Ticket is being criticized in some quarters.

The NEW DAWN randomly asked some residents of Monrovia what they think of this ticket, as Liberians gear up for the October 10th polls. Read their responses below.



Mohammed A. Kamara

“For me, I am very much thankful to the Almighty God for directing Joseph N. Boakai to make that brilliant decision. It is a very good ticket that will produce a

formidable force and we will emerge victorious in the process. Jeremiah Koung has the numbers; this is undisputable; it cannot be denied by anyone or any political institution and it is a clear win for the Unity Party (UP), understanding the geographical politics of Nimba County. Nimba has been one of the major counties that determine presidency in this country so, choosing a running mate from Nimba county proves that there is a possibility of 90 percent sure that whoever Nimba County supports in an election, the person will emerge victorious. This has been proven over couple of years.”

“Whatever our attachment, it doesn't still provide us the environment to understand the working of our regime, to just be frank, there are some of our brothers, who are supporting this regime and just criticizing because they feel that if things don't go their way, it means that it doesn't exist at all. But I will tell you that we do analysis; this opposition remains the richest opposition ever in the history of Liberia; the former Vice President is a millionaire, Alexander Benedict Cumming is a millionaire, Mr. Urey is a millionaire and there are many other millionaires in the opposition and looking at the ticket of the opposition that is ringing from the Unity Party belt is a ticket that is not to be overlooked. The combination of Koung and Joseph N. Boakai is an integrity ticket. Jeremiah Koung has numbers and he hails from the Southeast, from one of the populated counties of the Southeast which is Sinoe County. He also speaks both Kru and Grebo - those solidarity so, it is a threat to this regime. This is a strategy of the opposition; they have gotten one of their standard bearer from one of Liberia's



Fred D. Weah

populated counties, which is Lofa and the 2nd populated county, which is Nimba, where they have taken their Vice running mate. And there is another secret in the room that the national campaign chair will be coming from Bong County. So, what are we saying, we have other electronic media that are criticizing this identical ticket. We need to desist from that and go back to the drawing board to put things in order. I am an abandoned CDCian; yes, I do but I still support this regime, but I only felt abandoned. It doesn't mean that I am a former CDCian.

And what we need to look at the election that brought up Hon. Abraham Darius Dillon is that the media promoted Dillon. The negative messages that we preached against Hon. Dillon before is what made him popular. Today, in just one week, Jeremiah Koung's name has taken over the entire nation. It's because of the media that we think criticized Jeremiah Koung. Let's us meet the Koung-Boakai Ticket and then go back to our drawing room to put together strategy and ideas that will bring on a possible second chance.”

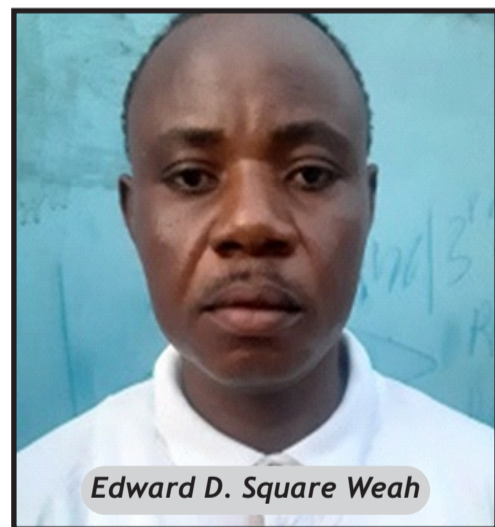
“The Boakai-Jeremiah Ticket is actually a victorious ticket. What causes the ticket to be victorious is on the basis of some historical analysis. The historical analysis will tell you that Jeremiah Koung actually has the number. If you observe the Nimbaians in terms of how they have supported the Liberian democracy with voting in block based on consent orientation. Some of the orientation is that they believe in the traditional history of those who bring them up. They are not ungrateful to their helpers; they pay respect to those who actually made support to see that their process of today is completely in the form that they are enjoying



Ernest Toe

today. So, if Jeremiah Koung is on a ticket of Prince Johnson, who is the political godfather, it ensures that indeed, Unity Party has a chance, Unity Party has the possibility, and Unity Party can make a difference in this coming elections. I am saying to you Jeremiah Koung has the numbers and Boakai and Jeremiah Koung is the best ticket - a victorious ticket this coming presidency, I can assure clearly.”

“For me, Boakai and Koung Ticket is a very good ticket that is going to bring full changes and transformation for the Liberian people. When it comes to political strengthen, politics is numbers. I think it was on that bases he was appointed as a Vice running mate and member of the rescue team for the Unity Party (UP) from the facts that Hon. Koung contested in three different elections in Nimba, two of them for representative seat. And he won and currently as we speak, he is the current senator of Nimba County so,



Edward D. Square Weah

on the bases of those factors, it means that he has the ability. So for me, this is the best ticket. This ticket is a very big threat to the ruling regime.”

“Hon. Boakia and Koung have a good ticket and Jeremiah Koung has the numbers and strategy when it comes to running campaign to bring people on board and he can bring changes in the party. It is not his first time in Liberian politics, he understands Liberian politics. He has the numbers and followers and connection to make the difference in the party. So, this ticket is a very good ticket even



Varlee Kromah

the opposition should not overlook it because it's a very big threat to this regime.”

Gbarnga-Siaquelleh Residents Want BVR Extended

By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan

It is less than 24 hours for the second phase of the Biometric Voter

least one or two days because they have delayed us two times now and all they can say is that the cards are finished. On Sunday, May 1, we all were in

who could not register due to the lack of cards to complete their registrations.

"I have not yet registered because the day I went to do my registration, we were told that the cards were finished. So, I had to go back to my village" Garmai Sukornormue told our Correspondent as she horridly ran to the line in fear of being late.

Garmai was hopeful that her process will be done but joins the calls for an extension in the date on grounds that there are others who left for their villages that day but have not returned to carry on their process.

NEC staffers at the Gbarngasiaquelleh center did not make a comment when contacted by our Correspondent. They, however, referred our Correspondent to speak with the upper Bong Magistrate Mr. Daniel Newland.

However, Mr. Newland, in providing clarities confirmed that there was a delay in Gbarngasiaquelleh for a day but he does not see any reason for extension because it is not the only place that has experienced such.

"Some places had delays for three days and some four and they are not calling for extension so why only Gbarngasiaquelleh? Look, people should not politicize this issue because there is no way that the process will be extended. How can they call for an extension when our staffers at that center have started registering 30 to 40 people for whole day?" Newland concluded.



Registration exercise to close in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and six other counties.

As mandated by the National Elections Commission (NEC), the process is intended to last for 18 days.

However, there are appeals for extension coming from Gbarngasiaquelleh, a very populated town in Bong County's 4th electoral District.

The town has one precinct with four voting places.

The citizen's decision to appeal for the process to be extended was triggered by an alleged delay that reportedly brought the registration process to a standstill for almost a day at the Gbarngasiaquelleh Public School.

"We are appealing to NEC to help extend our time for at

the queue, and I personally brought my mom to register but we stood with other people in the line for the whole day and did not register" Joseph Koko, one of the residents said.

According to him, because of the reported lack of cards by NEC Workers, many of the Registrants who came that day and stood in the long queue went back home because some came from nearby villages to do their registration.

"When they said that the cards were limited, we were left in the line and almost all of the NEC workers went elsewhere; leaving us here with one of their Staffers who kept saying that there will be cards soon."

They want the National Elections Commission to adhere to their appeals to extend the process by at least 24 or 48 hours to enable those

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West Point, New Kru Town

According to him, regarding issues relating to tress planting, climate change and climate residence, the project contacted an institution that will be given to mandate to plant 20,000 trees.

Making remarks at the official launch, Mayor Jefferson T. Kojee says the project should not be mistaken for a political project saying, "This project we're launching today is

meant to bring hope to citizens."

Both New Kru Town and West Point are unique; to those who say nothing good can come out of these two communities, [they] must be joking, because the launch of this Mongrow project is a testament of the many good things that have come from the two communities.

I owe nobody apologies to select the two communities; we share the condition of our

people, the mayor continues.

He throws jibe at politicians, telling residents of the two communities that those who are desirous of becoming town chief, ask them have they rented a room in West Point or New Kru Town and they won't answer you.

The Mayor reveals that discussion regarding the launch of the project began two years ago, calling on residents to work collectively to ensure its realization.

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Police arrest 3 teenagers

to remove a skull of a dead body.

"Well, they have explained their side, but we hope that the Liberia National Police will make sure they explain the real motivates behind their actions," the Commissioner said.

He noted that Liberia is a country of law, and his township respects the law.

"And that's why we have called the police, but we want those suspects properly investigated to serve as a warning to the others," he added.

The Hoffman Station Commissioner maintained that the situation is a first of its kind, and it has brought fear to residents of the township.

He however called on the

community dwellers not to panic because the police will handle the matter properly.

Meanwhile, parents of teenagers are appealing for mercy, saying it's strange to have seen their children in such habits.

"We are surprised because such [an] act has not been shown by any of them so what got into their minds?" one of the parents said.

EU commits US\$10m to Liberia's elections

By: Emmanuel wise Jipoh

The European Union (EU) has confirmed US\$10 million in funding toward the 2023 Presidential and Legislative Elections in October.

EU Head of Delegation to Liberia, Laurent Delahousse, says the funding will support and strength capacity of the National Elections Commission (NEC) to overcome hurdles in the pending elections.

Ambassador Delahousse also

for the successful conduct of the October 10 polls.

"Through the UNDP and the Liberia Elections Support Project, the EU is also providing additional ten million United States Dollars to strengthen the capacity of the National Elections Commission (NEC)", he says

Speaking on a local radio station in Monrovia on Tuesday, 9th May, Ambassador Delahousse expressed overwhelming confidence in the NEC to conduct free, fair, credible, and transparent elections.



EU Head of Delegation to Liberia, Laurent Delahousse

reveals the EU is to sign four major financing agreements with the Government of Liberia, through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Liberia Elections Support Project, which focuses on strengthening election financing

He says the EU support will cover observation missions to ensure the credibility of the elections, and that ongoing discussions with stakeholders so far indicate there are glaring signs of a more inclusive and transparent process in October.

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Kojee's lawyer pleads

heard persuading Monrovia City Police Director Col. Thomas Garwo to lie about his boss Mr. Kojee.

It is claimed that Garwo's demand for US\$10,000 to get his family out of Liberia was not met, and it allegedly broke down efforts to get him talking.

Garwo has returned to Liberia and spoke at the press conference alongside Cllr. Johnson.

Col. Garwo told reporters that his life was threatened if he failed to follow instructions to accuse Mayor Kojee of bringing arms into the country.

He also alleged that he was threatened to lie about Kojee and that he masterminded Charloe Musu's murder.

"I told them my wife is a mother and a prophetess and I won't lie on anyone, not even my boss man," said Garwo.

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LBA inducts new corps

making payments and sending remittances within Liberia and across the world.

He also used the occasion to urge all managing directors of commercial banks in Liberia to have remarkable results in their respective institutions.

The ceremony, organized by the LBA, coincided with the gowning of Mr. Mensah-Asante in a traditional African attire as a symbol of the Liberian heritage followed by a traditional name from Lofa County called

"Tarnue."

The program was graced by Finance and Development Planning Minister, Samuel D. Tweah, Jr., Deputy Finance Minister Samora Wolokollie, Central Bank of Liberia Executive Governor, J. Aloysius Tarlue, Jr., ably represented by his Senior Advisor for Multilateral, Michael B. Ogun; Cllr. T. Negbaee Warner, Board Chairman of Ecobank; Ghanaian Ambassador to Liberia, Kwabena Okubi-Appiah; and a host of Ecobank staff and friends, among others.

Koijee's lawyer pleads against U.S. sanction

By Lewis S. Teh

Cllr. Arthur T. Johnson has made an early plea with the U.S. Government not to sanction Monrovia Mayor Jefferson T. Koijee without all the evidence against his client. Johnson represents Koijee



MCC Jefferson T. Koijee

questioned after U.S.-based former Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) chair Cllr. Jerome Verdier accused them of being the culprit of Charloe's gruesome murder.

Cllr. Verdier had alleged that Koijee had ordered Telleh to attack Cllr. Scott, and in the

given circumstances before issuing sanctions on government officials.

"We call on our international partners to make sure to collect every factual evidence in [any] allegations before releasing sanctions," Johnson pleaded.

Addressing a press conference Wednesday, 10 May 2023 at his law office on Center Street in central Monrovia, Cllr. Johnson said placing people on sanctions in the absence of providing factual evidence is a bad signal for the country during an election period.

He claimed that it has the proclivity to create chaos in the country.

According to Cllr. Johnson, all those that are falsely accusing his client are people who are desirous of destroying the future of Liberia by their constant habit of spreading falsehood against prominent individuals.

He alleged that they aim to have prominent officials placed under sanctions by the United States government.

Meanwhile, Cllr. Johnson has released an audio in which is alleged that some U.S.-based Liberians were

in an ongoing investigation into the brutal murder of Charloe Musu, the daughter of Liberia's former Chief Justice Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott.

Koijee and his employee, Mr. Varlee Telleh, an officer of the Monrovia City Police, were questioned by the Liberia National Police (LNP) surrounding the death. The two men were

process allegedly Charloe was murdered.

Both Koijee and Telleh have denied having a hand in the case. But Cllr. Scott has reported that the authorities were treating her as the suspect instead of a victim.

Meanwhile, Cllr. Johnson has urged the international community, particularly the U.S. government to collect all the factual evidence in any

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